Limp

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Limp

by 57ish

Summary

Hannibal AU where Will and Hannibal meet for the first time in the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Hell and chaos ensues.

Not finished

Prologue

It is generally a bad idea to orchestrate an elaborate escape from a government facility in pursuit of the all-consuming, disastrous burden that is Hannibal Lecter's affections. Unfortunately, that's hardly a deterrent for Will, in fact, it may be an encouragement. Hannibal had always confused him in that sense, drawing out his desire for chaos, for recklessness, and pulling it taut, dancing the line between the comfort of safety and the thrill of mortality. Will figured he'd never know the feeling of certainty again after knowing Hannibal, not that he really needed it; what could be more exuberant than not knowing a single thing of what's to come? With Hannibal, Will can satiate his most devilish desires, take pride in his unorthodox, and bask in worship worthy of only gods. Certainty was trivial, really anything was trivial, if he had these things. Hannibal, of course, knew this and used it to his advantage

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will hadn't eaten more than granola crumbs and poorly cooked oatmeal in four days, his stomach felt taut in his belly, the sloping valley of his torso certainly reflected this. He glanced at the mirror one second longer and found his eyes sunken and glazed. His lips were dry and pale, his skin saggy and dull. He was utterly transfixed, the intensity of his gaze was almost entirely consuming. The internal war between his ache for pandemonium and a clean conscience glinted across his eyes for only a second, but that's all it took to step into his own mind as if he were an outsider. He, now a shapeless void, walked through a stream of bodies flowing and ebbing into each other. They existed outside of the usual physical laws of this dimension, moving in and out of the 3D plane. It was surreal and deeply disturbing. The stream seemed to extend into eternity both behind and in front of him, however on either side were forests. The forest to his left was dense, foggy and thinly coated in snow, though its greenery had turned varying shades of orange and red and purple; a permanent autumn. It looked ancient and foreboding. He felt a strange tug towards it, like a part of him had died there and could never be found, much less be re-adorned. He wanted to attempt regardless. He stared at this forest only a moment longer before realizing the tree branches were made up of antlers and the greenery was clumps of matted hair and blood shaped to resemble pine tree leaves. Despite not having any physical form, the familiar urge to vomit slithered up and wrapped itself around his consciousness. He couldn't look away. There was a mortifying beauty in it, the forest's initial deception serving as an exquisite aperitif to the most abominable meal you could ever have the misfortune of tasting.
To his right was more an intertwined collection of barren, poor excuses for trees than a forest. The leaves were green, but hardly so. The branches were thin and far too flimsy in the breeze. There was a vague blurriness to the image, Will could hardly define where one tree's branches met another's. He suddenly felt profoundly empty, the bleak sight before him bled into his every atom, dulling his everything; he could almost feel the weight of it pressing into his vision. The distinct image of himself tangled up in his own arms and legs gathered behind his eyes, each of his limbs twisted and contorted over the other like the branches in the forest before him. He was presented on a pedestal made of marble before a Catholic church. A pomegranate, strawberry, and one other unidentifiable fruit sat before him on a bone-white platter. Something made up of smoke and shadow and inky darkness danced around his peripheral vision, evading his complete awareness by only a hair. The tableaux settled where he supposed his gut would be before fading into oblivion.

Chapter End Notes

My chapters are usually a bit short, I'm sorry.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Content Warning: Graphic descriptions of a (gruesome) murder.

Blinking away the thin coat of sleep over his eyeballs, Will awoke slouched against a wall surrounded by more blood than he had ever seen before. The cold hardness of the brick against his bare back and neck acted as an adrenaline shot of sorts. His eyes shot open but he smelled the metallic, inherently wrong (but ever so addicting) scent of blood before he registered what he was seeing. There were four bodies, all different races, weights, heights and ages. The only similarity they held was the alarmingly extensive mutilation they all suffered, presumably at the hands of Will himself. He staggered to his feet, hardly having time to find some sort of exit before he vomited his breakfast everywhere. He wobbled towards the nearest door, hauled it open, then practically fell in and retched. After wiping his mouth and chin with the back of his hand while stepping out of what he now knew was a bathroom, Will surveyed the room around him. It was dark and shabby. Despite the overwhelming stench of blood, a familiar smell of cigarettes, strangers and sex lingered in the air. He was undoubtedly in a motel then. Done avoiding the subject of the maimed bodies on the floor, he cautiously walked towards and kneeled next to the most disfigured of the four. It was almost impossible to feel anything beyond insurmountable violence when Will looked at this corpse. The victim was female, judging by the sparse tufts of hair clinging to her head. He clasped onto both sides of her head and attempted to twist her neck, but found it wouldn't budge in the slightest. She had been dead for about 5 hours then. He gently set her head down and began examining her wounds. Her face had been completely skinned, only small chunks remained around the edges of her hairline and eye sockets. Her eyeballs remained in her head, but nearly detached as her eyelids had been taken with the rest of her skin. The entire sphere of her right eye was visible under the pools of blood; Will gagged and swallowed more vomit before tearing his eyes from her face. If he wanted, he could look into those lifeless eyes and see everything, become her. Instead, he squeezed his eyes shut but blood only pooled in the crack between his upper and lower eyelid. A rapidfire knock at the door scrambled any thoughts he might've had. After only a moment, Jack Crawford, the head of the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit, strode in. Jack was an intimidating, austere type with cropped graying hair and friendly brown eyes. He was attentive and passionate, offering an air of comfort and trustworthiness. Despite this, his manner of dress and straightforwardness of speech suggested he would be harsh and rigid, with his cleanly pressed suits in varying shades of deep blue and red to his determined commands. Will had always supposed Jack was perfect for his role at the FBI, his mixture of approachability and sternness fashioning an impeccable concoction. As soon as Jack's eyes found Will, they widened.

"Will," There was an unusual caution about his tone as he said this, as if he might cause an earthquake by simply speaking.

"Will, what happened here?" When Will turned and looked at, but not into, Jack's eyes he

found no friendliness, no comfort or trustworthiness. He found disbelief.
“Jack,” Will scrambled, feeling suddenly too exposed, too naked. There was too much going on; every cell in his skin could feel the syrupy, thick blood coating nearly his entire upper body and the subtle hum of electricity coupled with the soft blow of air conditioning vibrated through his skull. His eyes darted around impossibly fast, every image had so much clarity and noise that it was unimaginable to keep them in one spot. He could hardly find the words to express his panic, much less explain or defend himself. Not that he would if he had the ability. Will wasn’t the type to directly express discomfort, he preferred to burrow so deeply within himself that he forgot the grounds of his distress in the first place.
Will opened his mouth as if to say something, but no matter how much he willed it, nothing came. At this point, Will could feel everything everywhere as if he had unhinged his jaw not unlike a snake and swallowed the world whole. There was not a single molecule in the room he wasn’t vehemently aware of.
With a shaky deep breath, Will closed his eyes. He mentally scraped past his current predicament, past the lingering fragments of everyone he’s ever met, beyond the gaping void where his identity should reside and finally into the warm embrace of nothingness. He curled up there and became fog, smoke and air. Distantly, he saw Jack shouting at his personless body, hauling it with frankly offensive ease into a black and white car with a blaring siren and flashing lights, then finally abandoning it in a dirty room encased in cement and iron bars. A far off and inaccessible thought occurred to some version of him; he should probably be scared, he should wake up and come back to reality. He pointedly ignored this thought, in fact he ignored every thought and completely discarded any perception of the world around him. Panic gave away to indifference and indifference gave away to sleep.

Chapter 4

For the second time that day, Will found himself waking up in a foreign (and disadvantageous) situation. It crossed his mind that he shouldn't make a habit of this; it was as much upsetting as it was inconvenient. His entire body trembled with exhaustion and the throbbing ache in his neck and head was agonizing. He was still covered in blood, though it dried and crusted over enough he could probably scrape it off. With a grueling turn of his head, he noted his surroundings. Judging by his view of the orange and pink sky allowed by one small and high up window, the sun had just begun setting. Around him was an eight-by-ten-foot holding cell with grimy cement walls and four aluminum benches, three lining the sides and back and one, the one he now laid across, in the center of the room.

Will felt dreadful, God had certainly taken no pity on him or his situation, instead, He probably relished in it, rejoicing in the power He had but did not use. What did God feel when those four people were murdered? What did their killer feel? In some regards, the killer and God likely felt the same. God had the power to prevent their deaths and yet He did not. Their killer also had the power to prevent their deaths by not killing them. Evidently, he also chose not to. This killer was not God though. He was something entirely foreign to Will, yet almost familial at the same time. The sentiment licked down his spine in slow, chilling laps. He was capable of violence, yes, but did he enjoy it? Revel in it as God does? Will had adamantly rejected the thought when the door to the holding cell block squeaked open. Each sound clanged through his bones and ricocheted along his nerves.

"Will Graham?" He looked over at the source of his name. There was a plain but pretty brunette woman standing by the entrance. She was likely in her early thirties and had strikingly icy blue eyes that held a manner of expectation, she hoped for the best in everyone and regularly found herself thoroughly disappointed. Will didn't bother to respond, she would either state her case or leave, neither outcome concerned him enough to speak.

"My name is Alana Bloom. I'm a professor of psychiatry at Georgetown and a consultant with the FBI," She paused, waiting for a reply from Will or, really, any further acknowledgment of her presence. She would be waiting a long time, Will figured. At that moment, he didn't feel particularly inclined to do anything but rot away, consuming himself with excruciatingly disturbing thoughts and battling inner demons. Typical Will Graham behavior.

"Do you know why I'm here? Or more pressingly, why you're here?" She took a few steps forward, halting within mere inches of the iron-bar door to his cell. Will still couldn't bother to give her what she wanted. If she thought she could come here and psychoanalyze him, she was mistaken. He wrapped himself in stone cold adamant, it slid down his entire body, encasing him in an uncompromising coffin of frigid determination. He did not like to be psychoanalyzed, one person in his head was more than enough, he wasn't sure he could handle another. As for her questions, he, of course, knew why she was here, why he was here also. He had been arrested on suspicion of the quadruple murder in the motel- obviously. She was only here to find out if he was lucid enough to be held accountable.

"Will, I want to help you," As much as he didn't want to admit it, Will was in a hopeless situation. He had literally been caught red-handed and despite his firm belief in having nothing to do with the death of those four people, it certainly looked as if he did. He needed her help, or, at the very least, someone's help. Will was independent by nature, admittedly,

the thought of entrusting his future in the hands of this stranger was less than pleasurable. However, he was currently sitting in a holding cell, likely to receive multiple life sentences if he did nothing. Going in loops about whether or not to trust Dr. Bloom was not going to solve anything, he decided. He wanted to go back home, to see his dogs and wrestle with the bleak emptiness that had become his waking life. Prison was not a place he wanted to lose his mind. The adamancy and determination melted into compliance.

“How do you expect to do that, Dr. Bloom?”

Alana’s eyes widened at the fact he had not only acknowledged her existence but spoken to her. He shifted and sat up on the bench, physically inviting conversation.

“Like I said, I’m a professor of psychiatry,” She looked directly at him, into him. He waited for her to continue, but it seemed like she had intended for him to come to his own conclusions first, as she waited another few seconds before explaining that she could testify on behalf of his insanity- she would tell the court he didn’t know what he was doing. He hadn’t done anything though; something had been done to him. He was sure of it. And so, he said as much.

“Will, you were found in the middle of that motel room covered in the victims’ blood," He watched concern, pity, and something else, something clinical, sway and mix in the blue of her eyes.

“Why are you helping me, Dr. Bloom?” She gained nothing from this, in fact, she could be risking her reputation by testifying in his favor. What was her angle? He supposed he could look at her, really look at her, and figure it out. He was keen in that way; he could understand things about himself and those around him unusually well.

“Amongst other things, I have a professional curiosity about you.”

“You want to help me so you can study me like a rat in a lab?” He chuckled humorlessly at that; the audacity of psychiatrists never failed to astound him.

“Will, again, I want to help you, but you have to let me,”

"Whoever did this to me wants me to have no other choice,” She gave him an unconvinced look, but now he let himself look, really look, back. He let himself see the map of her soul and the blueprint of her mind.

It was a field of wheat and grass. The sky was dull and cloudy and there was a slight breeze that smelled almost chemical. The colors were bleak and clinical and gray. It was endless, extending in every direction beyond the horizon. He became the wind, he became the grass, he became everything he saw. As he let himself be devoured by her consciousness, he spotted something. A bright pop of pure, glimmering light. He waded through the tall grass and found beautiful tulips so white they glowed. There were about 30 clustered together, a radiant garden in the depths of her mind. Alana was a psychologist first and foremost; he understood this now. Her world is ruled by the forced disconnect between herself and her patients, but deep down she was passionate, she was good, and she was safe. He craved her stability and the peace of her mind- it wasn’t haunted with gruesome tableaus and misleading forests. It was curious as a cat, clinical as a doctor, and gentle as a friend.

Will decided then that he could trust her. He broke the silence they had shared with a sigh and a small smile, an unspoken announcement of his newfound faith.

“You’re tired, I’m sure. I can come back tomorrow, we can talk about what to do next,” She offered him a grateful glance before turning and walking towards the exit. Just before the door, she looked over her shoulder.

"Thank you, Will, for letting me help you.” And then she left.

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